

PAUPER'S DEATH MAY HAVE SOLVED COLT MYSTERY

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NEW YORK.

ONE day last winter just as the great town clock was tolling the hour of five and the glancing rays of the morning sun were tipping the distant hill tops, the soul of an old, old man passed over the threshold of life into the great beyond. It was whispered that he was nearly, if not quite, one hundred years old, and the worn and wasted figure on the humble almshouse cot did not belie this popular estimate of his age. For more than twenty years he had rubbed elbows with the paupers of the little up-State village in New York, and now that he was gone they missed him more than ever day by day.

His name was Clark, and his antecedents were unknown. He had drifted into town at the time of Garfield's death with a little stock of mourning badges and black bordered souvenirs of that lamentable event and he had remained. Perhaps he failed to dispose of a sufficient number of these emblems of national woe to provide the means of retreat, or perhaps he liked the place and remained from choice.

Even then, in 1881, he was a feeble, decrepit old man, with snow white hair and beard, uncertain step, bowed head and a sweetly sad expression of eyes and mouth, which, with his soft, gentle voice and courteous mien, made every one his friend.

There was little he could do at first beyond such odd jobs about town as raking a lawn or beating a few rugs and the like; for of physical power he had none, and few would have looked for clerical ability in such a woe-begone old wreck of humanity.

One day, however, a stroke of luck befell him. He was halted in the street by one of the foremost lawyers in the village and told to call at his residence for some carpets to be cleaned. Clark took a little memorandum book from his pocket and jotted down the address in a hand so perfect that it resembled copper plate engraving.

"Why, Clark, where did you learn to write like that?" exclaimed the lawyer in amazement.

Clark muttered some unintelligible reply and returned the little book to his pocket in haste and obvious confusion. But the fact remained that Clark was by far the best penman in town, and for the next five years he had all he could do copying legal documents in the Judge's office and in the court house.

Then came the typewriter and the carbon copies and Othello's occupation was gone. About this time, too, he sustained a slight stroke of paralysis from which he never fully recovered, for it left his right arm helpless and his speech permanently impaired.

In a few months his small savings were gone, and then there was nothing to do but send the poor, helpless old man to the county house, where he remained to the day of his death.

The Superintendent of the County Farm made the usual perfunctory effort to get his record for the Bureau of Vital Statistics. Everybody knew that his patronymic was Clark, and many affirmed that his Christian name was John, so he was listed as John Clark.

Age? Probably about eighty.
Civil condition? Probably widower.

Birthplace? Probably North or South Carolina.

The repeated use of the word "probably" on John Clark's history sheet, as it was filled out at the time of his admission to the poorhouse, was due partly to its thickness and almost unintelligible speech—the result of his paralytic stroke—and partly to a progressively increasing imbecility—the result of his age.

"Widower" was chanced on a brazen guess, as being most in keeping with the law of probabilities; but "North or South Carolina" was deduced, after repeated questions, from the old man's stupid but invariable repetition of the word "Caroline."

Just "Caroline."

As the years went by this single word "Caroline" grew more and more prominent in the poor old creature's senile mumblings until at last his fellow paupers devised a scheme of pampering their own craving for amusement by asking him, in tantalizing fashion—

"Where did you come from, Pop?"

Then he would sway back and forth in his chair and drone, "From Caroline, Caroline, Caroline, and I'm goin' back to Caroline, too," much to their edification and delight. If a woman came within his field of vision his face would brighten up with an expression of sweet, pathetic joy that afforded untold merriment to all beholders and he would croon, "Caroline, Caroline," softly, under his breath, until she passed out of sight.

One day in summer, when all the paupers were sunning themselves in front of the house, a magnificent, coal black horse sped furiously down the road while Clark was mumbling "Caroline" as his share in contributing to the general entertainment.

"Ef ye want teh git teh Carline," grinned one of the bystanders, "ye ought teh hev a colt like that leh tek ye."

"Colt!" cried the old man hoarsely, as, with ashen face, he tried to pull himself up in his chair under the trees. "Colt! Colt! No! My God! No! No! No! Not Colt!"

He laughed hysterically and waved his good arm over his head.

Then he fell back unconscious and his companions carried him, breathing heavily, to his bed.

He did not die, although everybody thought he would. But when at last he grew strong enough to be out again it was evident to all that he had practically lost what little remnant of mind he had possessed. All day he would sit in his chair muttering "Caroline, Caroline," unless one of the highly intelligent and cruelly facetious paupers suggested his getting a "colt" to take him to "Caroline." Then he would rave and splutter and scream "No! no! no!" in impotent rage until an attendant dispersed his tormentors and soothed his wrath.

So he lived on from year to year, a gentle, helpless, pathetic wreck of a man, until at last on that beautiful spring morning, just as the chirping, twittering birds were greeting the glorious rising of the sun, his poor battered old soul was wafted to eternity. The old pauper who was with him at the end said that with the first sunbeam that touched the whitewashed wall opposite his bed he slowly raised the only arm that he could move, and, pointing to the light, said, faintly but distinctly, "I—coming—Caroline—Colt."

Then, with a happy, restful smile on his wrinkled, maculated face, he turned his head to one side and died.

OLD POP" CLARK, Almshouse Inmate, Supposed To Be Murderer Who Was Wed in the Tombs Sixty-Eight Years Ago, on the Day Set for His Execution, and Who, Though Officially Reported to Have Committed Suicide, Was Believed to Have Escaped During a Fire by the Aid of Wealthy Friends



"Falling Forward to the Floor He Screamed, 'I Did It! I Did It! I Confess It All!'"



"Why, Clark, Where Did You Learn to Write Like That?" Exclaimed the Lawyer in Amazement

Not much of a story, you will say. Just the death of a pauper centenarian, who once could write a good hand; who constantly repeated and seemed to love the word "Caroline," and whose feeble, idiotic mind represented the mere suggestion of a colt.

Let us see.

More than half a century ago, on Saturday, September 25, 1841, a schooner lay at her pier at Maiden Lane, cleared for New Orleans, and, with the blue peter flying at her foremast head, evidently about to sail. Already a pair of fretful little tugs were fussing and fuming under her stern preparatory to pulling her out of her berth and towing her down the bay. The sailors on deck were standing by to cast off a line to one of the tugs with which to drag its heavy bawser on board, when the second mate approached the captain hurriedly and the two held a short but earnest colloquy. All preparations for departure came to a standstill; willing hands lifted the forward hatch, and after a short search a heavy wooden box was raised to the deck and quickly lowered over the side to the wharf.

A crowd of longshoremen and others whose curiosity had been aroused by the strange doings on board the schooner clustered around this mysterious chest and viewed it with wondering eyes. The captain and other officers of the vessel clambered down to the pier, tools were procured, the cover of the box was wrenched off and there lay, exposed to the horrified gaze of the onlookers, the grewsome body of a man, wrapped in a torn up awning and packed in salt!

The schooner had been advertised to sail on the preceding Saturday (September 18), but she had been delayed for a week, and the odor from the box had attracted the mate's attention just as she was ready to put to sea.

The truckman who delivered the box at the wharf was advertised for in the HERALD and was located without difficulty. He remembered carrying the box and said at once that he had received it early on the morning of the previous Saturday from John C. Colt, a professional bookkeeper and teacher of penmanship, whose office was in a gray stone building at Chambers street and Broadway. This building was afterward occupied by Delmonico as a restaurant, and the fatal room on the second floor, overlooking Chambers street, has doubtless been the scene of many a jolly revel since the brutal murder of Samuel Adams on the afternoon of Friday, September 17, 1841.

Murder Will Out.

The mystery was a mystery no longer. The truckman swore positively he had received the box from Colt himself and carried it from his office to the wharf on the morning of the day that the schooner was to have sailed for New Orleans. The dock superintendent testified to receiving the box on that day and to giving Colt in person a receipt for the same. Both of these witnesses said that Colt was pale and haggard and in a highly nervous and agitated condition.

Adams, who had been missing for a week at the time the box was opened, was a printer and was well known to Colt, for whom he was printing a work on bookkeeping of which Colt was the author. Moreover, Adams was a frequent caller at Colt's office, whither he went every few days to carry proofs for correction, and when last seen he was on his way to visit Colt for the avowed purpose of collecting some money which he claimed was due him for printing, and over which the two had had many stormy interviews.

So Colt was arrested and indicted for the murder of Samuel Adams as the result of a quarrel over an alleged indebtedness of less than fifteen dollars! Colt was more than able to pay this trifling sum, and his friends were unanimous in maintaining that he never would have killed a man for so trivial a cause.

However, his arrest was soon justified to the satisfaction of every one, thanks to the judicious application of the famous "third degree," for this ingenious method of investigation resulted in a full and detailed confession of the crime, in which, however, he said he acted first in self-defense and later in such a frenzy of terror that he had no distinct recollection

of what occurred until he woke to a realization of the fact that Adams lay dead on the floor, his head battered in with a hammer.

In the case of John C. Colt the "third degree" was operated thus:—For two days and nights—fully forty-eight hours—the prisoner was compelled to forego sleep, even to the extent of the shortest imaginable cat nap. Relays of police kept him awake during this period, talking to him and demanding replies to their questions, forcing him to get up and walk about, and otherwise preventing him from closing his eyes. No force or violence was employed at any time, but his nervous system was completely exhausted, when, at midnight, he was taken from his cell, and, trembling and tottering from sheer fatigue, was conducted, silently and mysteriously, through dark, rambling corridors and up and down innumerable stairways until, at last, he was ushered into a large, dimly lighted room.

In a group of chairs at one end of this apartment were officials in full uniform, and Colt was motioned to a seat facing them. Not a word was spoken. Any sound, no matter what, would have made a welcome break in the ghostly stillness of the place.

Suddenly, and without warning, a door was opened and, bathed in a glare of dazzling light, the truckman who had handled the grewsome box was led slowly across the room in front of the shivering culprit. He disappeared through a door in the opposite wall and once more silence and obscurity reigned supreme.

After a few moments, and in like manner, the door opened again and the pier superintendent was paraded past the terrified man.

Another pause, and the boy of whom he bought the nails with which the box was closed passed in review. Then the janitor of his office building; then a brother of the dead man; then the tenant of an adjoining office.

Not a word was spoken, but each of the individuals as he passed through the room gazed at Colt with wonder and amazement. The prisoner knew not what they might have seen or said, and they themselves were equally in ignorance of the significance of the whole affair, for they had merely been summoned to appear at Police Headquarters and no explanation of any sort had been vouchsafed.

During this dreadful ordeal, which was dragged on for several hours, the eyes of the police seated opposite Colt never for an instant left the face of the cowering wretch, and when, at last, his common law wife, Caroline Henshaw, with whom he had spent the night of the murder, was brought before him he felt himself deserted by all the world, and, falling forward to the floor, he screamed, "I did it! I did it! I confess it all!"

Confession Is Signed.

The poor, miserable wreck, half dead with terror and exhaustion, was led back to his cell, and, his mind relieved at last of its awful secret, he fell into a deep sleep and was not disturbed until worn out nature was partly refreshed and he woke of his own accord.

An elaborate confession was then written and signed by him, and, his spirits returning, he proceeded to make himself as comfortable as possible while awaiting his trial. Thanks to his own personal resources



"The Seizing of the Hammer and the Blow Were Instantaneous"

and the wealth and social position of his relatives, Colt lived like a prince while in prison and wanted for nothing in the world but liberty. The sides of his cell in the Tombs were covered with muslin, over which was hung the most attractive wall paper. Costly rugs covered the floor, and the windows were filled with potted flowering plants of rarest fragrance and beauty. In the matter of visitors no restrictions were imposed and all his meals were sent in from a neighboring fashionable restaurant.

Colt's confession, which was long and full of detail, served merely to bear out the theory of the police that the crime had been committed in an altercation over money alleged to be due Adams. To uphold his claim of self-defense, which was his plea at the trial, Colt said, among other things:—

"He [Adams] made the remark that I meant to cheat him. In the meantime we both had been figuring on different papers, parts of the account. Word came that we were to have a fight, and until we came to blows. The words

"You lie" were passed and several slight blows, until I received a blow across my mouth, and more, which caused my nose slightly to bleed. I do not know that I felt like exerting myself to strong defence. I believe I then struck him violently with my fist. We grappled with each other at the time, and I was shoved against the wall with my side next to the table. There was a hammer on the table, which I then immediately seized hold of and instantly struck him over the head. . . . The seizing of the hammer and the blow were instantaneous. I think this blow knocked his hat off, but will not be positive. At the time I only remember his twisting my neck handkerchief so tight that it seemed to me as if I lost all power of reason; still I thought I was striking away with the hammer. . . . The first sense of thought was, it seems, as though his hand or something brushed from my neck downward. . . . A faint idea remains that I shoved him off from me so that he fell over, but of this I cannot say. . . . I then sat down, for I felt very weak and sick. After sitting for a few minutes and seeing so much blood I think I went and looked at poor Adams, who breathed quite loud for several minutes, threw his arms out and was silent. I recollect at this time taking him by the hand, which seemed lifeless, and the horrid thrill came over me that I had killed him."

The document goes on to tell in detail how he washed himself and his telltale clothing in the "Washington Bath House, Pearl street, near Broadway." He says:—"I then went home. It wanted, when I got home, about five minutes of eleven o'clock. I lit a light as usual. Caroline wished to know why I came in so late. I made an excuse, saying I was with a friend from Philadelphia, I think, and that I should get up early in the morning to see him off."

He had already stripped the body, wrapped it in pieces of an old awning, packed it in the box, which, filled with books, had stood in his office; disposed of the clothing and everything else belonging to the dead man and scrubbed the floor with water which he drew from the pump in the street and afterward threw in the gutter.

In the morning he rose early and was "nearly dressed when Caroline woke up." In the words of his confession:—"I stated to her it was doubtful if I would return to breakfast; did not return; went to the office and found all, apparently, as I had left it. I went after some nails and got them at Woods' store. The store was just opened. I returned to the office, nailed up the box on all sides and went down to the East River to ascertain the first packet to New Orleans. . . . I returned to my office by way of Lovejoy's Hotel, opposite the park. I went to the eating room and called for a hot roll and cup of coffee; I could not eat, but drank two cups of coffee. Went to my office, locked the door and sat down for some time. I examined everything about the room, wiped the walls in one or two places and then went home and to bed."

Colt's trial was the sensation of the day and caused as much popular excitement as have any of the great murder cases of recent times. It lasted ten days and was conducted by District Attorney James R. Whiting. The defence was "self-defence," and was intrusted to several of the ablest lawyers of the period.

The Amazing Escape.

In spite of the most desperate efforts, which began legitimately with the employment of the most brilliant legal talent that a lavish expenditure of money could provide, progressed valiantly from court to court, and ended ignominiously in frantic but futile attempts at bribery, nothing could save the doomed man from the vengeance of the law, and the jury, after deliberating for several hours, brought in a verdict of "Murder in the first degree." The Governor was appealed to in vain and John C. Colt was sentenced to be hanged on November 13, 1842.

During all this time Colt's common law wife, Caroline Henshaw, had been unwavering in her loyalty and devotion and had visited him daily in the Tombs. Colt himself was no less true to the woman who loved him so faithfully and begged to be allowed to marry her before he was hanged.

Strange to say, this grewsome permission was granted and at half-past eleven of the day named for the execution the woman presented herself at the cell door, attired in a straw bonnet, a green shawl, a claret colored cloak trimmed with red cord and a muff. She was accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Anton, John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home," and a brother of the prisoner. Colt was cheerful, self-possessed and even jocose, and the marriage was immediately solemnized in the presence of Justice Merritt, the Sheriff, Colt's brother, David Graham, Robert Emmett and John Howard Payne.

The execution was set for four o'clock. The gallows were erected and all preparations were complete. The bride and bridegroom were allowed to be alone together for a time and at the conclusion of the ceremony all but the unhappy couple withdrew from the cell.

Suddenly, and just as the clock was trembling on the stroke of four, a cry of fire was heard. The cupola of the prison was in a blaze and the engines were soon rattling and clanging in the streets.

In spite of all this confusion and distress the Sheriff remembered his duty and that a man must die. Mr. Anthon, who had just performed the marriage ceremony, was now sent to the cell to notify the condemned wretch that his last moments had come. The cell door had been considerably closed during this sad parting interview and when Anthon slowly drew it open the sight that met his eyes caused him to spring back with a cry of terror and dismay.

The woman was gone and on the bed lay the body of a man with a knife in his heart!

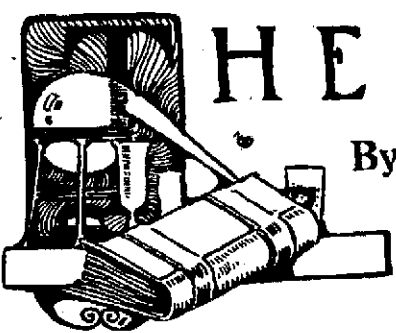
Next morning, November 13, 1842, the HERALD printed a long editorial, entitled, "The Last Day of John C. Colt; His Extraordinary Suicide and Death," and in another allusion to the subject, which was the chief if not the only topic of the day, it raised the important question, "Who gave him the knife?"

Caroline Henshaw (or Colt) disappeared promptly from public notice, and the body found on the bed was given decent burial by Colt's grief stricken family.

Thousands, however, in all parts of the country believed firmly, as the newspapers of the time will show, that the fire in the cupola of the prison was prearranged by Colt's wealthy friends, and that through their instrumentality the body of a man was provided and placed in the cell during the excitement of the conflagration, while Colt and his bride made their escape in the general confusion.

Who knows?

All we can be sure of to-day is that old "Pop" Clark died in the poorhouse up the State—that he once wrote a copybook hand—that he loved the word "Caroline" and hated or feared the word "Colt!"



By Luke Thrice

A story that strongly appeals to the imagination and wrought with fine skill by Luke Thrice in the "Master Rogue" series written especially for these pages.

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"LAXTON," said the master sternly, "don't deny it. You're hungry and you need a share."

The visitor rubbed his chin with deprecating gesture and an uneasy smile as he moved back out of the sweep of the billiard table lights. "All right, all right, I won't," he mumbled.

Burch stepped over, dragging his cue, and studied the somewhat rumpled and disordered figure presented by the guest, so different from the sleekly prosperous appearance which was ordinarily his. "Where on earth have you been the last two weeks, and what's wrong with you?" he demanded sharply.

"Easy now, Burch," protested Laxton. "The three men I hired to cut my coupons can't seem to get through, for all their working on day and night shifts. And I forgot the key words to my fourteen safe deposit vaults."

"You're broke," said the master.

"How'd you guess it?" grinned the other.

Burch clapped his hands and Ota, the Japanese, flashed noiselessly into view like a suave demon from a trap. "Take him," said the master, nodding at Laxton, "and don't bring him back here until he's presentable—bath, clothes and feed—understand?" Ota smiled. Laxton would have refused.

"I didn't come for a handout," he began.

"What's that?" snapped the master sharply. "You're got straw in your hair, and look at those shoes!"

"I came to tell you something," said Laxton, doggedly finishing his remark. But Ota had him by the arm with a gentle, significant grip and he surrendered. The two disappeared into the cage of the automatic elevator and Burch resumed his quiet, skillful manipulation of the ivories.

Established in the roof arbor later in the evening with the master opposite in expectant silence, lapped in the creature comforts once more, a glowing Coronation between his lips, Laxton luxuriated, sighing contentedly. "There's one thing," he remarked, profoundly, "if we didn't get the other once in a while we wouldn't appreciate this."

"It's a yarn nearly strong enough to line up with your own," was Laxton's expansive introduction. Then, with unapproachable slyness, he added:—"How would it strike you to make gold, d'ye see? Heaps of gold. Pour in rocks at one end and pick out your nuggets by the fistful at the other. How does that listen?"

The master smiled. "Rather out of your line, isn't it?" he asked. "Have you been going in for alchemy?"

"That's it," said Laxton readily; "that's just what I have been doing. It's a good graft, almost. It begins like this:—

"I was following the postman down—th street in the West two figures on his last delivery, on the chance he might leave something in a front door box or behind a basement grate. I got two letters and sponged them quick with alcohol, but there wasn't so much as a postage stamp inside. Then he shoved one through the grating at a regulation brown stone and nobody answered the bell. The brown stone was boarded up, main entrance and windows, but there were signs of life in the basement. I was ready to admit the letter was probably for the caretaker, a touch from the old country like as not, but I went after it. It was typewritten, and addressed to 'Professor Max Blenkamp,' at the number.

The Long Haired One.

"I swabbed the letter, but could see no check or anything of the kind. I was just about to toss it back when, through the thin paper of the envelope, made transparent by the alcohol, I caught some queer words. Something about gold, 'shipments of bars should reach Denver each week—supply must be fed slowly—will be forthcoming immediately for expenses.' I haven't got the phrases pat, but it was about like that. The postmark was city.

"Well, other people's correspondence never held the rope on me, especially when it gave off the haunting perfume of money. I opened the letter, stuffed the envelope in my pocket and started to improve my mind when the basement door came open and a young chap with a pale face and long hair eyed me from behind the gate.

"Did you ring?" he said, looking very hard at the folded sheet of paper in my hand.

"I was just about to apologize for my mistake and beat it on the wing when I looked over, my shoulder and spotted a cop from the Eighteenth precinct strolling along the opposite side of the street and staring hard in my direction. I never had any use for anybody from the Eighteenth since the Medworthy affair, and that particular cop had a familiar look about him. I chose the young chap without a wink.

"Why, yes," I said, having already noted that the enclosure began with a repetition of the Professor's name and address before the 'Dear Sir.' The fact is, I retitled on glibly, 'I just picked this up in the mud near the Grand Central after a trolley rammed a United States mail wagon and cut up some of the sacks. I thought I'd bring it around.'

"It was a flabby tale and I didn't tell it well, having an eye on the buttons across the way. But I had nothing on the young chap for nerves when he got a nearer peep at the letter. He turned from pale to the color you see on the under side of a flounder.

"Ha—have you read it?" he stammered.

"Why, to be quite frank, I have," I replied, taking the hint from his scared face and jumping into one more little fib for the sake of consistency. I was ready for a yell and a scramble, timing the distance out of the yard and down to the avenue, when the gate gave way underneath my hand and I almost fell into the arway and the arms of the young chap. I was tugging at my hip pocket and holding him off when he opened the inside door and waved for me to enter.

"Come," he said; and because the cop was watching the tableau with unpleasant interest I came, a good deal frightened and wondering what the layout was. I followed him into the basement dining room, and when he asked me for the letter I let him have it like a lamb. He read it through, then turned to me. I was getting back my wind by this time, for he looked pretty soft and not at all like a lad who knew he'd got the drop.

"How much do you want?" he asked. Just like



"I've been bit, badly bit on this game before."

that. Mentally I was staggering for the nearest lamp post. I hadn't more than a shadowy tip on what I was expected to know, so how could I put a price on it? But from the few phrases and his own actions I was reasonably sure that it was something on the crook, so I pushed a hard face.

"You've got to count me in, that's my price," I answered, cool as a compress. He regarded me fearfully, but I observed no immediate symptoms of a fit, such as I half expected.

"That's a big commission," he said; "the Professor will have to be consulted."

Just on the Verge.

"Well, it's a big thing, and I think I could likely be useful," I rapped back. I was pushing the thing for all it was worth now.

"The young chap appeared greatly agitated, pacing back and forth with his hands gripped behind him. He looked like a man who'd seen more of bugs and shellfish through a microscope than he had of people through his two eyes. 'This is most annoying, most annoying,' he kept murmuring. 'Just as we are on the verge of the great event; but why not?' He threw his arms wide. 'Why not? There will be enough for all, and if the alarm were given now it would be fatal, fatal!'

"You bet it would," I put in cheerfully, to help him along. I couldn't quite make him out, and I set him down as something of a bug himself. But you never can tell what an amateur will do, and this lad was acting like a medical student caught in his first body snatching plan. He stepped in front of me.

"I happen to know that the Professor needs the aid of another just at present," he said. "I'm his only helper at this end. He might use you somewhere."

"Not at Denver," I answered boldly.

"No, Denver is attended to," he said, with a queer glance. "You would have to be most discreet," he added.

"That's my business," I told him, pretty truthfully.

"The Professor is ill upstairs," he went on. "He can see no one but myself. Remain here while I acquaint him with the strange chance that has thrown you into this affair. I fear—I fear the result in his present condition." And he went out, shaking his head and leaving me alone in the dining room.

"I could have seen his back more willingly if he had left that confounded letter behind, but I despatched myself as a flying squadron on an exploration of the ground floor, hoping to get a line on the game. The dining room was dusty, frowsy and just a messy litter of greasy plates, broken victuals and unwashed utensils. In the other, stood a makeshift laboratory table, loaded with queer, bloated bottles, glass pipeline systems and machines like pumps. It was all a puzzle to me till I dragged out three square wooden boxes from under the table.

"Then I was hep." They were half filled with little shapeless lumps of metal, some crusted, some with shiny, yellowish surfaces. Iron pyrites. I knew all about 'Professor Blenkamp' without going any further. I helped 'Al' (Wise) once on a variation of his usual 'sweating' process. He used pyrites in a fake combined smelter and compressor of his own device containing a hidden interior arrangement for dribbling a stream of pure gold. The comcoons saw the pyrites go in and the gold come out. It cost them \$30,000 to discover that the pyrites had no connection with the gold.

"It all fitted as neatly as the parts of a jigsaw. The 'Professor' had taken a small house for his plant and had caught one more fall guy with a modern version of the alchemist racket. The letter I had opened was from the victim.

bars should reach Denver each week—supply must be fed slowly—will be forthcoming immediately for expenses." There was the phrase I loved. "Will be forthcoming immediately for expenses."

"I had counted myself in at the right moment, just before the big haul was to be made. Evidently the letter I was supposed to have read gave away the whole game. As for the other bits, about the shipments, and 'feeding the supply slowly,' they showed how thoroughly the comcoons had been taught the usual patter. I remembered how careful 'Al' Wise had been to explain to the 'syndicate' he milked that they must not flood the gold market all at once, and that they must feed their product by degrees from some natural point, so that instant panic and investigation would not occur.

Springing the Trigger.

"I was waiting for the young chap with a broad grin when he came downstairs again. 'Well?' I asked. 'Decision?'

"He scowled at me, but I was on both feet with him now. 'If the Professor had only been able to confront you himself you wouldn't have forced yourself so easily on us,' he said fiercely. 'I'm not capable of handling such a thing properly myself.'

"I believe you, my son," I said. I could well imagine how the 'Professor' liked taking in another partner at this stage. Apparently he had picked this one on form as a harmless fool.

"You're to stay, of course," he said. "The 'Professor' had a bad attack when I told him. But he can't stand and you're only me to deal with, so we're practically at your mercy."

"I never saw anything so refreshingly simple in my life as that young man. He was a gem. 'And of course you can't very well call the police to throw me out,' I suggested.

"He gave a gesture of assent. 'You'll get your share,' he said.

"Thanks; I'll see to that," I told him. "Now where's the machine?"

"In the cellar."

"And when do we spring the trigger?"

"Hub?"

"When does the big show open; when do we exhibit?"

"Oh, the demonstration is this evening. You must have seen that in the letter. Mr. Savage said he would be here. He should come any minute now."

Savage was clearly the writer of the letter.

"Hasn't he seen it before?" I ventured.

"No. He was anxious enough, but our results would not have convinced him. Everything is working perfectly at present." He rubbed his hands, as excited as a child over the prospect. I felt relieved. At least, no payments had yet been made.

"Is he going to fork over to-night?" I asked.

"If he is satisfied he will give us \$10,000 to go ahead with—expenses for further work."—A jagging of the basement bell interrupted him. "There he is now," he cried, and rushed to open.

"It was twilight in the dining room, and I could make little of Mr. Savage when he was ushered in. He was a little, stout man and seemed all on wires, fussing and snorting and bustling around, asking for the 'Professor,' damning the 'Professor' when the young chap said he was ill. 'I've got five minutes, just five minutes, to get through with this,' he snapped. 'Hurry up and let's get it over.'

"The young chap stammered and fell all over himself, but I saw now why the 'Professor' had chosen him. No one could suspect such an idiot of being a crook. He finally indicated that Mr. Savage should up-light himself to the cellar while I should come up to carry down the stricken 'Professor.'

On the innocent forgot to offer an ex-my presence, which seemed to bother

Savage, for he kept peering at me through the dark. "The young chap snapped on the lights as I followed him up through the house, empty and bare as a barn, to the second floor. 'I was curious about the 'Professor,' but he wasn't 'Al' Wise, as I'd rather hoped. He was long and thin and white, wasted to a string, lying on a cot. Only his fierce, burning eyes moved behind his wild tangle of hair and beard as we lifted him on a stretcher. He didn't say a word or raise a hand, but if he could have reached me with those eyes I'd never have breathed again. God, how those eyes hated me!"

"We carried him down, the young chap and I, to the cellar. The setting was more or less familiar. The two gas jets showed a huge steel cube occupying most of the space under the kitchen. Heavy electric cables connected with it through a switchboard, and thick steel bands operated with worm and screw gears on both sides to depress with a horizontal lid, now raised on slides. A draining funnel over a fixed metal basin sampled one end, a massive, cylinderlike arrangement the other. It was a good plant, something like Wise's.

The Mysterious Cube.

"Savage was fuming and fretting around as we placed the 'Professor's' stretcher alongside the machine. He came running up to the white, old man, and then, for the first time, I got a flash of his face. The next instant I ducked around to the other side of the cube, making toward the rear stairs that led up into the kitchen. The 'Professor' had hooked a poor victim. Savage was one of the 'syndicate' that 'Al' Wise had plucked the time I helped him. I hoped he hadn't seen me. I rather think he did, but he began to talk nervously with the 'Professor' and I sneaked away.

"As I got to the stairs the young chap came down, carrying the boxes of pyrites and an armful of little bags and bottles. He set the pyrites aside, but under the direction of the 'Professor,' and while Savage fussed and pried around, sticking his head under the lid to feel and watch, he began to pour various ingredients into the crucible from the top of the cube. I didn't follow very closely. I was busy stealing up the rear stairs to make my getaway. When the young chap had finished Savage went back and bent over the prostrate, motionless figure on the stretcher. I caught nothing from the mumble of their conversation. Savage was getting more and more excited—I thought I knew why—jerking and twitching and mopping his round, red face. I crouched at the top of the stairs to see the last of it. The young chap, at a sign from the 'Professor,' crossed to the switchboard and threw several handles. Presently a dull red glow grew inside the cube, and a low, humming note of motors arose.

"The three watched in silence, broken only by Savage's shuffling and rising excitement, until the intense glow boded the cellar. Then the 'Professor,' a weird, gaunt, unearthly figure, in the strange light, suddenly raised himself to a sitting posture, his fierce eyes rained with a fire of their own. He spoke with difficulty, slowly and hollowly. It was either great acting or he was a tough old boy to go on with his game in such a condition.

"Mr. Savage," he said, "you are privileged to be present at a demonstration of an invention that can accomplish all things. There is power in that cube to crush nations, uproot and destroy the economic and industrial fabric of the world. If used sparingly it can give one man or any group of men complete mastery of the human race. It can produce, without limit, the recognized standard of wealth." He reached under his covers and drew out a long, slender, crystalline phial with a silver top, partly filled with a sparkling purple fluid. "Here," he said, impressively, but simply, "is the vital substance, the secret of my discovery, kamlum, the properties of which are beyond my own definition except that it will accomplish what men have sought in vain to accomplish throughout the ages, the refining of the baser metals into gold."

"His voice was like a bass viol string, gently sung by the bow. I was on to him, but he had me hypnotized. I didn't care if I never made my getaway. The 'Professor' had Wise backed off the board for finish and method. The young chap was charmed to stone, mouth open. It occurred to me now that he probably believed every word of it. The 'Professor' would be just why enough to have such an assistant. Savage was in a distressing plight. His coat was flying open. He was working his handkerchief overtime. His little, pig eyes were set with a glassy stare in his flustered, shiny face. He kept jiggling around on his heels, fairly bursting with emotion, holding

himself in check only by the physical contortions he went through with. Rage, the appetite of a vastly lustful soul fear, ferocious acquisitiveness, were tearing at his vitals.

"My discovery of kamlum was partly accidental, partly the result of a lifetime of study," resumed the 'Professor.' "I have produced, finally, about an ounce of it, sufficient, roughly, to manufacture sixteen tons of pure gold from twenty tons of the compound which you have seen fused in the crucible. That compound, consisting of certain cheap and available metals, costs less than \$500 a ton.

The Lure of Gold.

"There is no need to go into the chemical or technical aspects of the process. You can readily verify all the statements I make. You have watched my assistant place the preliminary material in the cube. He will next lower the lid and subject the molten mass to a considerable pressure. Then, by the plunger device at the end, also my own invention, he will force a tiny drop of kamlum into the crucible. The result will be a combination and disintegration of the elements in the mass which I remain powerless to analyze. A terrific convulsion will take place within the steel cube, which is constructed to withstand enormous strain from the released gases. After the subsidence of the miniature upheaval the opening of a complex valve will allow pure, molten gold to flow into that basin, in a proportion, as I have said, of about four parts to five of the base metals."

"I thought Savage would fly apart. The fat, fleshy little man raised a hand to his mouth, and I saw the teeth sink into the wrist as he made one more desperate and successful effort to hold himself in check.

"This phial," continued the 'Professor,' even, musical voice, "contains all the kamlum in existence. It is, beyond a doubt, the most potent substance known, containing forces a thousand times more wonderful and strange than those of radium. Its action on the metals, in conjunction with the pressure, and a rapid, vibratory movement of the mass, induced by the motors, is to readjust the arrangement of the molecules to that of gold."

"My own part in this experiment is henceforth to be made easy. I am an old man. I have spent my last many in the researches of fifty years. I have absolutely proved the theory and practice of alchemy. I have made gold by the pound. But I am at the end of my resources. Others, the first of whom will be you, Mr. Savage, must now come to my aid if the work is to go on. I have earned my reward."

"When I have satisfied you I shall expect liberal advances for the construction of a new and larger machine. From the first products of that machine I shall acquire real property to an extent that will insure me luxury and plenty for the rest of my days. I insist upon this as a safeguard, for the indiscriminate use of the invention would make the possession of monetary wealth useless. After that you may have full control to proceed as you see fit. I shall further agree to furnish you with the formula for kamlum, which will remove all limits to your action. If I were younger I would not relinquish the command. Once my invention held out the lure of power to me, power such as no dream of Tamerlane, no mad vision of world empire ever approached. Now I am old. Give me comfort and rest. That is all I seek."

"He was magnificent, the old 'Professor,' as he stretched out his thin, wasted arm and held the phial toward the young chap. 'Take it, William,' and proceed with the demonstration. Watch closely, Mr. Savage, that you may understand the significance of the first step in the evolution which is to make you a deaconnaire."

"The young chap, coming out of his trance with a start, reached for the bit of crystal, with its luminous purple fluid. He had almost touched it when Savage, finally broke from his repression with a scream and hurled himself across the space, snatching the phial from the 'Professor's' trembling hand. The round tub of a man, swollen by passion, shaking with fury, was a fearsome sight in the hellish red glow of the crucible."

"Give it to me," he yelled, scarcely able to form the strangled sounds that forced from his throat. "Criminal! Murderer! How can a man do such things, say such things? Damn, damn, damn! I could claw, scratch—you old impostor, you monster!"

"The 'Professor' and William held motionless with terror before this frightful, insane outburst. Savage, transported, raged up and down before them, shaking the phial above his head.

The Great Blast.

"I know you," he screamed, leaping toward the 'Professor' as if to crush him. 'I've been bit, badly bit, on this game before. Do you understand? I, Morris Savage, was plucked once. Do you see what's going to happen to you now? And you sit there and spin your mad delusion story of wealth, tempting me in spite of myself, uttering such damning blasphemies to me—me!"

"The man was essentially unbalanced concerning money. The 'Professor's' scheme of riches almost beyond conception had turned him into a raving maniac.

"It's sacrilege," he stormed. "Hideous sacrilege. With your furnace and your kamlum and your lure of gold, I've seen it, heard it, all before. I hoped you might turn out to be Wise, the man who robbed me before. You're worse, much worse. But I've got you, I hold you, do you hear?"

"The 'Professor' recovered with a gasp. 'The phial!' he thundered, with sudden strength, 'give me the phial!' He grasped at it impotently and Savage spat away.

"The phial! mocked the little man in another spasm, 'ask the police for your phial—your wonderful phial!' He thrust a hand into a pocket, snatched out a whistle, and, thrusting it between his lips, sounded a long, shrill blast. 'To hell with your phial!' he shouted, and, still lashed by madness, he flung up his arm and sent the glittering bit of crystal hurtling into the red maw of the crucible.

"The world vanished in one vast purple flare. A mighty blast struck up through the night and I knew no more.

"When I got a line on things again I was lying in a mass of debris at the further end of the yard, with men celling and trampling about me. A cold shock of water aroused me, and I crawled painfully to the open. The 'Professor's' house was a mass of flames. Firemen had torn down fences and dragged in lines of hose from the rear, fighting hopelessly against the blaze. Under cover of their work I got away through a gap they had made and found myself finally in the yard of a stable at the other side of the block. And there I crept in and up to the other side of the block. I stared shiveringly low and sponging off the stableman's ladder, when he was away until I judged it safe to come out."

The master, hidden behind a veil of cigar smoke, made no comment, and a pause hung between them. "You might tell me what the papers made of the thing," suggested Laxton.

"A fire caused by a mysterious explosion, destroyed a house where the police were about to conduct a raid, supposedly upon counterfeiters," said the master.

"Any—bodies?" asked Laxton.

"Three."

Again the pause hung between them. Burch broke it this time.

"Were you hurt?"

"Not much," grinned Laxton. "But say, did you ever see the effects of a scattering charge of buck shot fired into a man? That's what my back looked like, pitted and peppered all over. I had a great time digging out the pieces."

"What were they?"

"And that's a funny thing, too," said Laxton. "Most of them were bits of the iron pyrites. The blast must have scooped sideways and up before it struck me, driving the contents of the boxes like hail."

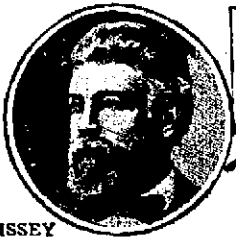
"Did you save any?"

"Sure; kept them for souvenirs of the 'Professor.' Great old boy, the 'Prof.' Laxton fumbled in his coat and drew out three little crusted pellets, which he handed to the master. Burch examined them carefully, then shot a twinkling flash at the visitor.

"You can find the answer, Laxton," he said, "but these are pure gold."

And when Laxton had been revived and Ota had brought the acid they verified it.

JOHN MORRISSEY'S FIGHT WITH "YANKEE" SULLIVAN



PRIZEFIGHTER, Adventurer, Politician, Began in a Paper Mill and Made a Million--Went to Congress, Defied Tweed and Kelly and Was Never Beaten in a Fair Fight on Any Battle Ground.

JOHN MORRISSEY

AS the first period in the history of the prize ring ends with "Tom" Johnson, and the second with "Tom" Spring, so the third closes with the brief championship of "Tom" King. From the 60's on the ring became less and less an exclusively British institution, the influence of America, and later Australasia, changing conditions and traditions. After the retirement of King, his old opponent, "Jem" Mace, who is still living in London, a hale, hearty and well liked old man, resumed the world's title, which had been wrested from him. A retrospect at this point is necessary to trace the course of the American championship before it became merged with the championship of the world.

The first recorded championship fight in this country was between Jacob Hyer and Thomas Beasley, in 1816, won by the former. The next American boxer of note was "Tom" Hyer, who beat John McCluster in 101 rounds in 1841. Hyer retained the national title by defeating "Yankee" Sullivan in 1849.

A few years later John Morrissey appeared as a claimant, and a match was made, but Hyer forfeited. This left Sullivan and Morrissey to decide between them the question of the American championship.

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HERE were "gang" fights in Troy during 1849, the kind that used to rage in the streets of American cities as fiercely as any factional row of Middle Age Italy. Few persons were interested save the good citizens of Troy, who thought dolefully upon their shattered windows, but out of the flurry of clubs and brickbats came a man. It was John Morrissey.

John Morrissey never cared much for cudgels and flying missiles. Nature had endowed him with a frame of iron, two gigantic fists, the qualities of honesty, shrewdness and the force of the leader. Instead of marshalling his cohorts of the "uptown gang," he took a cleaner, a more effective and a more congenial way of impressing his immediate views upon his opponents. Within a year, having then attained the age of eighteen, he called out and conquered in single combat, one after another, nine of the enemy. The thing was done quite casually and with no other reason than because he preferred a standup fight to his breakfast and the arbitrament to fists to that of bricks. When it was over the "downtowners" were crushed, if that meant anything, and John Morrissey was a great name in what sporting circles the country could boast of.

Tipperary was the county of his birth, and while he was engaged in his vanquishing of the nine he worked first in a paper mill and later in an iron foundry, where one of his fellow employees was John C. Heenan, who afterward made such an ambitious bid for pugilistic fame. In 1850 he found himself stranded in New York, with \$5 in his jeans, ready to fight anything that stood on two feet. Nothing of that class being forthcoming, he joined the gold rush and stowed away on the mail steamer to Panama.

Escaping righteous wrath by slipping ashore at the isthmus, he tried his \$5 against a faro bank, ran it up to \$700, and then lost his last cent. A steamer was about to start from the other side for California, tickets quoted at \$1,500. With a companion, Cunningham, he craved the armed sentries and stowed away a second time. Three days out they were discovered and were about to be set ashore at the end of the earth—Acapulco—when the steerage mutinied.

"Who'll stand by me?" asked the captain.

"We're here," said Morrissey, leading Cunningham forward.

"Can you fight?" asked the captain.

"Why, sir," said Morrissey, "in a manner of speaking, it's my trade." So the two overawed the mutineers and earned their passage to San Francisco, Morrissey using the steerage as a training camp.

After an unsuccessful venture to Queen Charlotte's Island in search of gold Morrissey came back to San Francisco, once more penniless, to find that one styling himself George Thompson was announced as the general challenger for the pugilistic title of California and \$1,000. This was a windfall. Morrissey hunted up backers and put away Thompson and his \$1,000 in eleven rounds. Then he returned to the East, challenged "Tom" Hyer, the champion of America, and assumed that title himself when Hyer forfeited.

Taking the management of a public house in New York, Morrissey became the centre of local sporting interest and led a checkered and active life for some years, finding fights, scratch, pitched or rough and tumble, wherever an opportunity presented. During this time he gained his nickname of "Old Smoke." While engaged in a trading discussion with a customer named McCann Morrissey knocked over a stove and fell prostrate upon the glowing coals, where his adversary pinned him. McCann repeatedly asked him if he had had enough, while the champion roared and smoked in torment. Morrissey's answer was to twist himself free, when he proceeded to settle Mr. McCann in convincing manner.

The Sullivan Challenge.

In 1853 he was challenged by "Yankee" Sullivan, who had suffered defeat at the hands of "Tom" Hyer, for the title and \$2,000. Morrissey accepted with alacrity. He was just turned twenty-three, a rugged, compact, clean muscled gladiator, in perfect condition and spoiling for more trouble. Fighting was the breath of life to him. The prospect of a setto with such a man as Sullivan filled him with delight. Here, at last, was an opponent worthy of his best efforts, calling for every ounce of his fine young, red blooded strength.

They met at Boston Four Corners, 103 miles from New York, on October 12. The place was well chosen, for by some strange oversight it was temporarily outside the jurisdiction of all authority. Massachusetts had ceded it to New York and New York had failed to accept. To Boston Four Corners, accordingly, swarmed some five thousand fight followers, sure of good sport and freedom from interference.



"The big fellow stood a minute, weaving and waving his arms, then fell."

Morrissey was the first to drop his cap within the ropes and to climb through with his attendants. He stripped at about 170 pounds. "Yankee" Sullivan and his assistants appeared shortly before two o'clock and final preparations were hurried through with. Sullivan stood up at about 150 pounds. He was a stocky man, much shorter than Morrissey, but hard bitten and solid as a stone pillar. Veteran of many battles, he was forty years old, but fresh and active, depending not only upon his superior knowledge of the game but upon a strength and endurance as yet untried by age. Whatever advantage in science lay between the men rested decidedly with Sullivan, though the fight was not likely to bring forth any startling display of technique on either side. These were days when scientific boxing was little known and less appreciated on this side of the Atlantic, when a ring meeting was a downright test of manhood within certain simple limits.

When the colored kerchiefs had been tied to the stakes, stars and stripes for Morrissey, black for Sullivan, time was called and the men advanced to the centre, eyeing each other watchfully. The attitude of neither could be called graceful. They stood upright, with hands high and knees bent, ready for hard knocks rather than shifty play. At the last moment Morrissey's second, eager to show himself awake to his principal's interests, sprang forward and protested against the length of the spikes in Sullivan's shoes. The quibble was contemptuously put aside by Morrissey, who took the occasion to make Sullivan a final offer of \$500 to \$1,000 side bet. Sullivan shook his head and hostilities were joined.

Sullivan feinted deftly and waded into heavy work without more ado with a right hand smash that jammed Morrissey's guard and got home to his nose. John came right back with right and left drives, but was out of distance and gave Sullivan a chance that he improved with a neat clip to the left eye. There was no instant waste in sparring between fighters of this kind. Hit and take, ding-dong, was the style, with the victory waiting for the one who could land the hardest and stand the most. Sullivan's smash whipped Morrissey into quick action, and, breaking his set defence, he charged, milling fiercely, swinging and uppercutting as "Yankee" backed away. Sullivan was master of few of the fine points of the game, but one thing his long experience had taught him and that was the trick of dropping in the face of danger, so skillfully, if doubtfully, practised by Bendigo and Caunt. When the berserker youngster came rushing at him Sullivan footed it away with great agility and fell through the ropes before Morrissey could reach him.

The Second Round.

John showed the effects of the rough treatment when he came to the scratch for the second round, the crimson having been drawn plentifully. He had evidently determined that his fault lay in awaiting attack, and as Sullivan approached Morrissey sprang for him, sweeping a tremendous left at the head. Sullivan blocked the blow prettily, fished out a stinging right to the nose and got away nimbly. John, exasperated, followed hard after him, and "Yankee" fought upon his retreat, parrying Morrissey's hard but too deliberate swings with ease. Having backed his man into a corner, Morrissey drove for the body with right and left. Sullivan dodged aside and swept in with a snacking drive to the sore eye. John fought back at him eagerly, but Sullivan was too quick, slammed through two more to the face and went down to save himself.

Morrissey was now more than willing to go upon the offensive, having had a monopoly of the punish-

ment thus far. He opened the third round instantly with a left drive that might have felled an ox, but Sullivan was not there. The older man let the blow slide past and drove a short, hard jolt to the ribs as John came on. Morrissey was now at close quarters, where he felt more at home, and he bored in, landing right and left to the body and stopping a vicious swing. Then, as Sullivan sought to back away from his position, Morrissey pressed after him and slashed out a terrific right hander that caught Sullivan fairly upon the left cheek, covering him with crimson and whirling him across the ring. The spectators caught sharp breaths for a moment, but "Yankee" was not knocked down. He staggered back, sent a light tap to the ribs and then fell.

The situation was now clear. Sullivan was far the more skilful, more wary, quicker and craftier. But Morrissey had the punch. If he could land many of those flailing right handers before blinded or weakened by his adversary's tactics Sullivan must yield. Briefly, Sullivan was something of a boxer and something of a fighter; Morrissey was no boxer at all, but a most formidable and dangerous fighter.

In the interval after this round Morrissey's left eye, which had swollen greatly, was lanced. His face had been slashed beyond recognition, but he was untroubled in wind or strength. His one complaint to his attendants was that Sullivan would not stand to him. It was a just grievance and the grumbling grew general as the fight progressed. Sullivan, taking advantage of one of the rides, went to grass throughout the battle when hard pressed. It is a fact quite in keeping with the character of John Morrissey that not once did he seek to end a round, escape from a corner or avoid punishment by dropping. A fight was what he wanted, whether he was winning or losing, and "Old Smoke" was never the one to signal that he had had enough.

Sullivan, recovered from the effects of the tremendous face he had received, took the lead again in the fourth round, opening right and left and advancing. John parried, but could not force through Sullivan's guard, and "Yankee," stepping in, shot over a punishing lunge to the nose. The blow drew claret freely, and Morrissey, already half blind, was quite abroad. Sullivan shifted ground quickly and rushed, jabbing right and left to the face. But he counted a trifle too confidently on John's plight. As he drew off for another opening Morrissey launched a wild right swing which, more by chance than by direction, caught "Yankee" a rocking smash to the left side of the head. Sullivan went spinning, but John could not or would not follow up, and "Yankee" returned, planting three swift taps to the face before he went down.

Morrissey Badly Battered.

Morrissey was a fearsome sight when he came forward briskly for the fifth round, Sullivan's scheme of decoration having been elaborately carried out upon his frontpiece. The damage received by "Yankee" was less apparent, but the left side of his head and face was much swollen and he seemed inclined to favor it, holding cautiously on guard. Morrissey was nothing loath and whipped in play with a driving right, which Sullivan stopped, and a hook to the body that drove his man clear away from him. "Yankee" abandoned his waiting and came back strong, swinging right and left. Morrissey met him and they clashed in the first lengthy exchange of the battle, hammering back and forth with mighty drives and swings. John found this well to his liking, and after taking some pepper to the face got the upper hand, landing to the body and head and pursuing Sullivan as he danced away. When he caught up

with his man "Yankee" felled him once more by driving Sullivan and slugging him repeatedly about dropping just in time to miss a pile driver.

It was Sullivan to the fore in the sixth round, opening with a sharp smack to the mouth. Morrissey once found himself well within distance and lunged across with a sweeping left, catching "Yankee" on the side of the neck and wilding him. Sullivan made a few feeble feints and went down. He had no heart to stand more than one of John Morrissey's thunderbolts in a single round.

Morrissey's left eye was now closed beyond hope of aid from the lance, but he was as fresh as in the first minute. In his tactics, aside from his careless guard, his lack of snap and speed was the weakest point. He came on slowly, delivered ponderously and seemed not to know that there were such manoeuvres as dodging, shifting and retreating. His single purpose was to

sharply reversed, John landing twice to the other's head and body. "Yankee" saving himself only by fast footwork, clever guarding and finally by dropping. The next two rounds were short. In the twenty-third Morrissey rushed again, taking two rapid drives to the face as of no more account than puffs of wind, and sent a terrific left swing to the side of the head that cut Sullivan down like a reed.

Sullivan had benefited by his slacking from the pace and now took the initiative once more. If he was ever to regain the early superiority he had shown he must do it now. He was again too swift for Morrissey in the twenty-fourth and planted heavy right and left handers to the face, shoving through a rib searcher as John plodded steadily on after him. They joined for a hot exchange in the middle of the ring, "Yankee" delivering slash after slash to the head and Morrissey countering to the body with an occasional slam that drove Sullivan away wincing.

It was a gallant rally on the part of the older man, but brought him nothing. John was always there, ready, impervious to "Yankee's" best blows, waiting his chance to land a sapping drive, never evading any clash. As Sullivan said afterward, Morrissey fought as if he were wound up for a year's going. After further mutual compliments Sullivan ended the round by dropping Morrissey frowning and shaking his head at him, highly indignant that any man should wish to end such a pleasant argument so abruptly.

In the twenty-fifth round Sullivan swept into his stride quickly and opened with a flush hit to the face. It was the only blow that seemed to promise anything. He could make no impression upon Morrissey's body and his natural hope lay in blinding John's sound eye. Again he swept through his left, and again, Morrissey returned heavily to the side of the head and "Yankee" jerked off his feet by a futile right swing, took to the grass.

It was still Sullivan and his left handers in the twenty-sixth. As long as he could foot it fast enough John had small chance of reaching him, and "Yankee" tried hard to work the hit and get away at the necessary speed. He lashed two wicked ones to Morrissey's raw face and dropped when John took after him with heavy drives.

Taunts and Blows.

Sullivan now sought to intersperse his tactics with some gentle badinage on the chance that he might incite the big fellow to a display of temper. He wiped John's face with a stinging left swing and hopped out laughing.

"Now, who's champion?" he taunted. But if Morrissey was expected to read in this that he could never overcome such a skilful and active opponent the attempt was a failure.

"That's to be seen," he answered calmly and jammed in a right drive that sent "Yankee" to the ground in a hurry. For the next two sessions Sullivan hit and went down without ceremony.

In the thirtieth round John led off, brushing the other's guard aside and planting a rattling swing to the left cheek. Sullivan whirled back with three rapid rocking smashes to the face and dropped. He peppered Morrissey in the next two rounds and escaped unscathed. In the thirty-third they stood up for a moment and exchanged counter hits to head and body, but "Yankee" was exhausted and could make nothing out. He had done everything possible, tried every trick in his repertoire, apparently beaten his man to a pulp. And still John was with him, steady as a rock, wholly unconscious of the fact that by all precedents he ought to consider himself defeated.

It was only a matter of time from this point on. Sullivan's strength declined, though he continued to exert himself to the utmost and he had lost heart. He got to the face in the thirty-fourth round and fell. In the thirty-fifth John reached him again with a wide, stunning swing to the cheek that sent him to the turf. The next was a wild session, Morrissey meeting Sullivan's desperate charge with battering swings to face and body and sending his man down.

In the thirty-seventh round even Sullivan's friends could see that the tide had turned strongly against him and they grew restless, swarming close about the ropes, yelling at Morrissey and threatening disturbance. John paid no attention, and when Sullivan led weakly to the face he rushed, hearing "Yankee" back irresistibly. Hugging his man about the neck, he lifted him clear of the ground, preparing for a heavy fall that hardly could have failed to end the battle. The Sullivan supporters, however, took this instant to swarm over and through the ropes in a howling, clawing mob, and the two fighters disappeared under the invading wave. Great confusion followed, the men were separated and swept out of the ring and in the midst of the uproar the referee gave the decision to Morrissey. His specific reason was that Sullivan had left the ring first and without awaiting instructions. Whatever the exact facts, which were long disputed, there was no doubt that Morrissey was far in the lead and deserved the victory. The fight had lasted fifty-five minutes.

Morrissey's only subsequent appearance in the prize ring was with John C. Heenan, the "Bendigo Boy," who later drew with "Tom" Sayers, the great little world's champion. He whipped Heenan out of band in eleven rounds in 1858 and announced that he would never thereafter step within the ropes. He kept that resolve, though he did not mean that he would never fight again. John Morrissey without some kind of a fight in prospect would have been like a diamond without the sparkle. He fought as occasion arose, and carried the propensity with him through life.

He was successful with his gambling houses in New York and Saratoga and at one time was said to be worth a million dollars. He lost half of it in the crash of "Black Friday" and much of the rest through unfortunate speculation. Commodore Vanderbilt stood his friend and aided him out of several difficulties.

Morrissey always had taken active part in politics, and in 1856 he was elected to Congress by the democrats from the Fifth district. "Boss" Tweed was then in full power and Morrissey owed the nomination to him, but the man's innate honesty and pugnacity would not permit him to be time server for any one and before the end of his first term he began to develop another fight, this with Tammany Hall. Tweed did not want to renominate him, but Morrissey was too popular with his constituents and he went back in 1858.

From this time on he became the bitter and avowed enemy of Tweed's "ring" and he threw himself into the struggle with the same dogged tenacity and determination that had characterized him as a prize fighter. He was one of the leaders of the "young democracy" revolt of 1871 and lent every assistance to Greeley, Tilden and others who were bent upon freeing the city from its tyrants.

When Tammany Hall passed under the control of John Kelly Morrissey was still ready for trouble. Before long he was again at outs with the powers and Kelly attempted discipline by expelling him from Tammany. Just such a move was necessary to put Morrissey in a fighting frame of mind, and in 1875 he came forward as an independent candidate for the State Senate. His popularity and good public record won him support from the voters of all parties and he won. He repeated the victory in 1876 and 1877. The campaign of 1877 was hot and in a close race the man who had never known fatigue or spared his marvellous physique overtook himself. He died in May, 1878.

Morrissey's political career, like that of his pugilistic days, was free from stain. While conscious of his limitations and refraining from pushing himself forward, he was always careful to act honestly and to the best of his judgment. For the rest he was, first and last, a fighter and a man.

hit solidly. That the adversary should also hit him was quite a minor consideration. Probably no other man who ever entered a ring fought with the superb recklessness and simplicity of John Morrissey.

Sullivan fought through the seventh round without taking a hit, landing twice to the face and once to the body before he fell. Morrissey, irritated by the other's slippery method, hammered into the next session with a full head of steam, forced Sullivan literally to take to his heels and drove him all around the ring, seeking in vain to land a blow. "Yankee," who would have been slow and sluggish for a fast, scientific boxer, was still as elusive as a moth at dusk for the willing, straightforward John. The chase lasted until Sullivan went down.

The ninth round was more spectacular. Sullivan had discarded some of his caution and went after John viciously. Morrissey's aim seemed to be defective in the hot rally that followed and his blows generally fell short. "Yankee" meanwhile snapped in with a straight slam to the face, getting away, came back, got away and back again, accurately and well. In the mixup John smashed one to the cheek that wiped the left eye, where he had inflicted damage before. Sullivan dropped as usual, and in the interval it became evident that he no longer had the advantages as to sight, for John's attentions to the eye had done their work. The tenth round was fast, Sullivan getting in all over Morrissey's face without great injury and taking another clip to his bad eye. After severe counter-biting Sullivan was down.

"Yankee's" attendants warned him repeatedly at this stage not to force the pace, but to hang back and wait for his man, whom he could outmanoeuvre at his leisure. Sullivan, however, was now warm for battle and led off the next session with smashes to the face. He paid the penalty of overzealousness by getting in the way of another of John's battering ram drives, which caught him in the ribs and lifted him clear across the ring to measure his length. The next three rounds were short but hard, Morrissey getting twice to the bad eye and accepting more face treatment with equanimity.

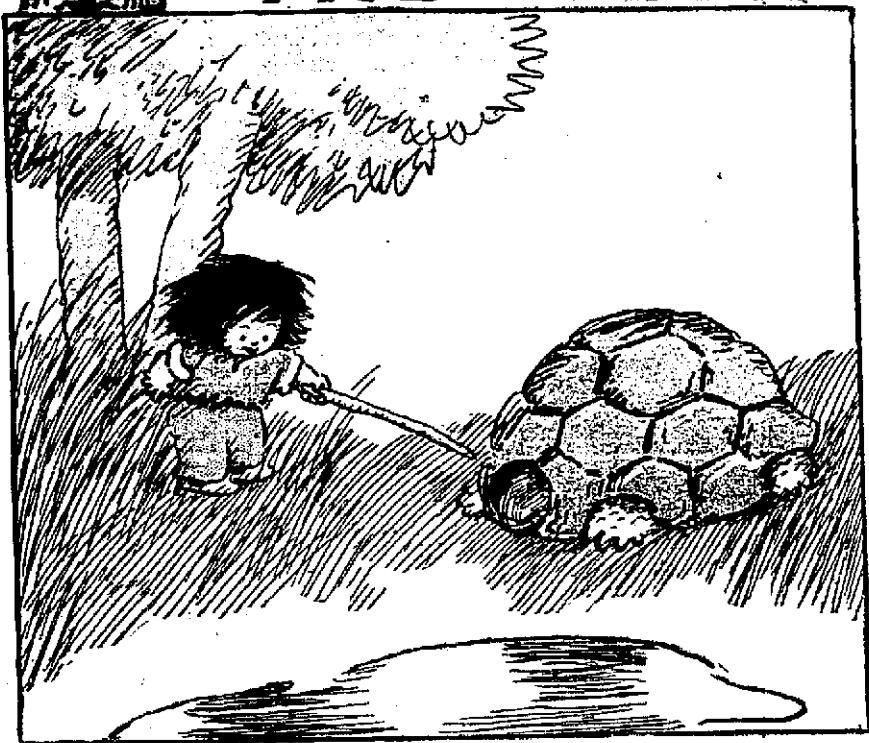
On to the Fifteenth.

Sullivan had now handed out enough punishment to have laid any ordinary fighter in a dreamless sleep, but Morrissey, though terribly carved, seemed to like it better with every round. He flinched not at all from "Yankee's" battering receptions, apparently lured by the worst the other could do and felt amply repaid if he could return one for six. This state of affairs was decidedly discouraging to Sullivan and the older man, disregarding the advice of his second, continued to make desperate efforts to impress his strangely persistent adversary. John meanwhile was quite contented to fight on in his own dogged, deadly way.

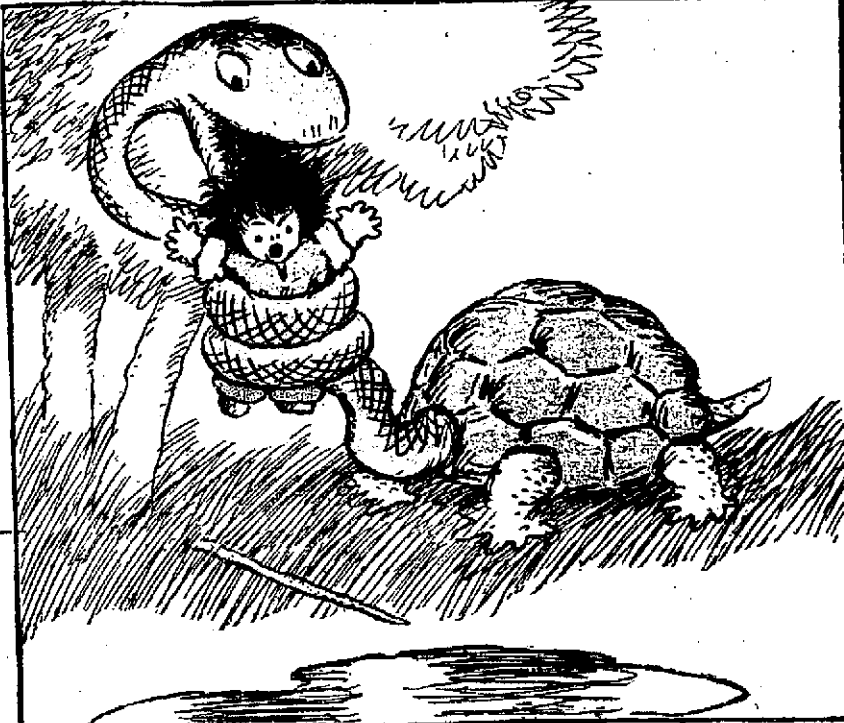
The fifteenth round began with a steady torrent of blows from both sides, Sullivan smashing to the face and Morrissey cheerfully jamming a weighty drive to the side of the head. Then, with sledgehammer strokes, John forced his man to the ropes and after a hot rally threw him over them. In the next session, with his backers crying caution at his heels, "Yankee" tried again, got three quick cuts to the face and went down. He continued in the seventeenth, landing repeatedly but failing to stop Morrissey, who in his own good time rammed wallops to the left cheek and body. The following two rounds were short, Sullivan dropping to each.

"Yankee" was now plainly weary and winded, John by contrast seeming fresher than ever. Morrissey was wise enough to increase his pace as his opponent fell off, and in the twentieth he rushed impetuously,

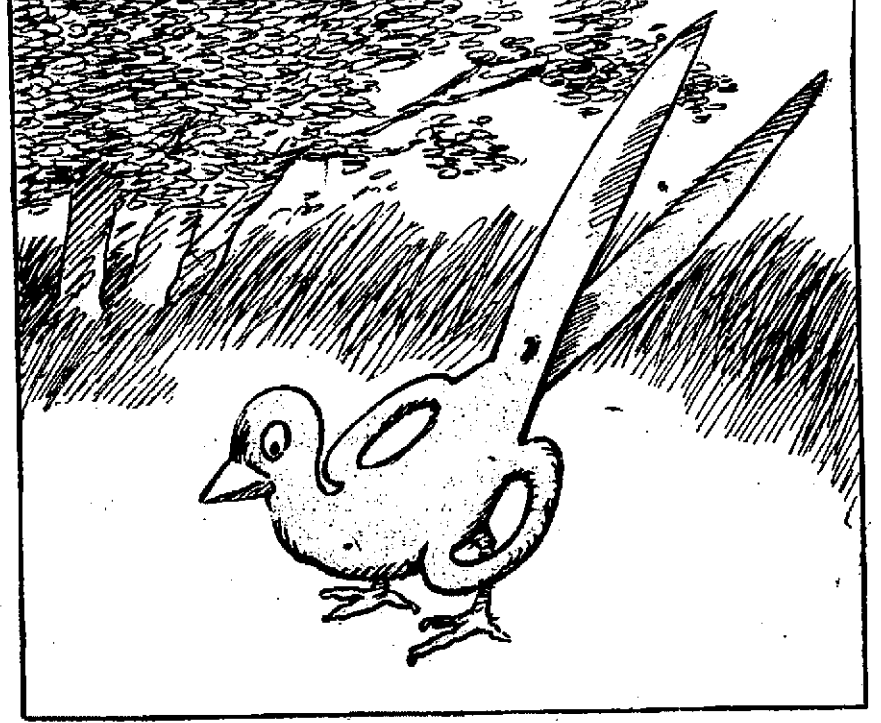
THE TERRORS OF THE TINY TADS



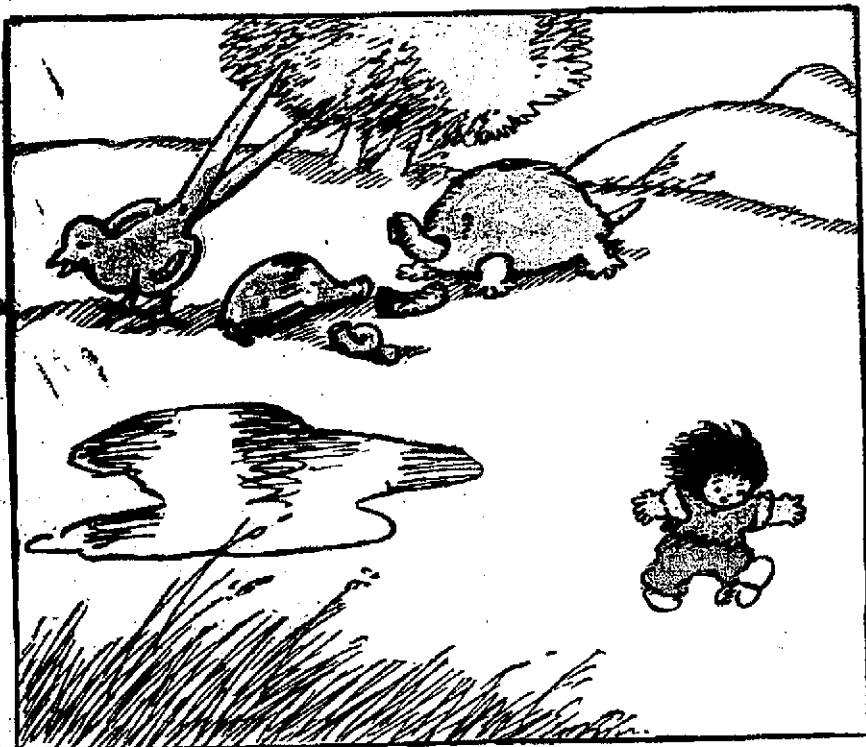
1—Oh, run away, you tiny Tad! You must not loiter here. That is a Boa Constrictor's hole, and it might bite you, dear!



2—Ah, see, the Tad has poked it with a sharply pointed stick. And now you hear him yelling "Help! Oh, some-one help me, quick!"



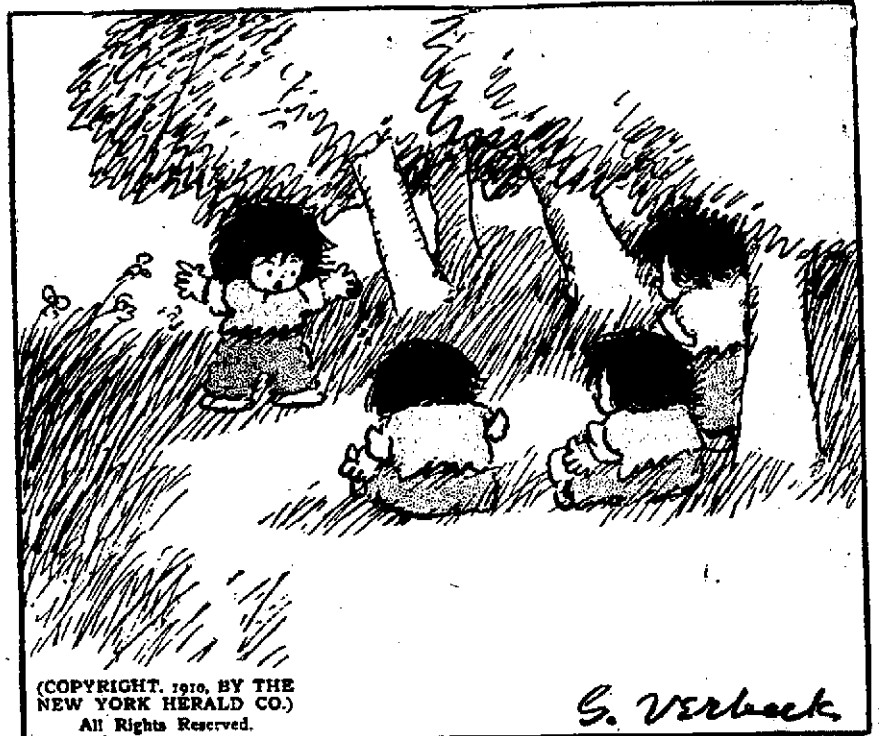
3—But here's a bird, a funny bird. "I'll save that Tad," says he. "I'll kill that horrid reptile and I'll set his captive free."



4—And then the brave Scorpion cuts off the monster's head. And liberates the Tiny Tad, who's glad he isn't dead.



5—His Auto-mobility-goat is near, and he jumps into it, And urges it at greatest speed to where his comrades sit.

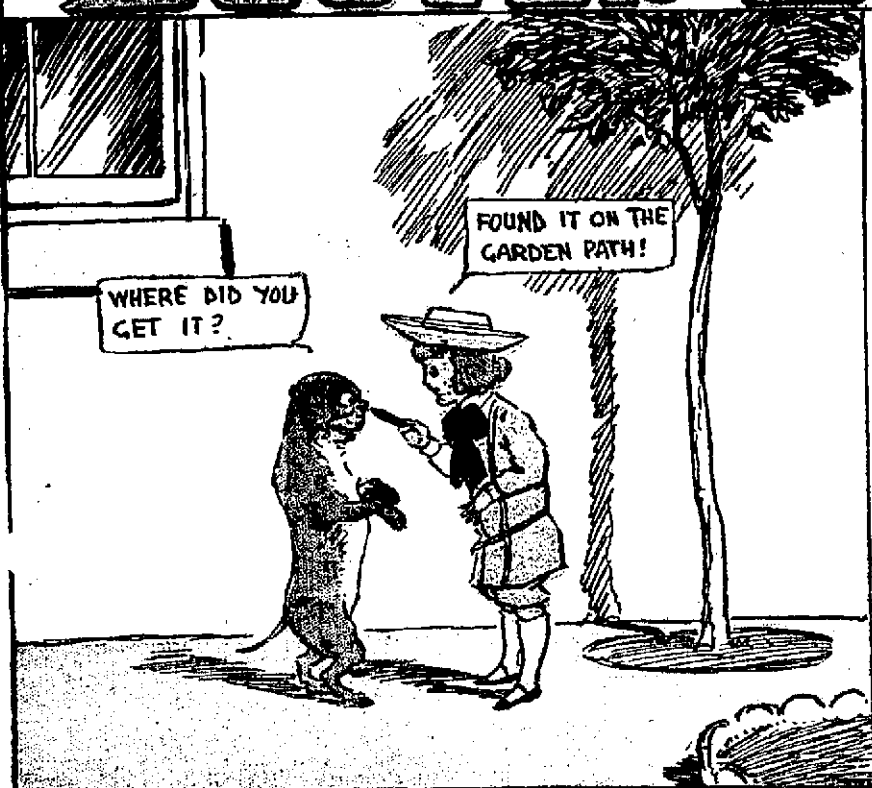


6—"He was a funny bird," says he. "His tail was very droll, But anyhow he saved my life, that brave hezoriole."

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G. Verbeek

BUSTER BROWN SMOKES A CIGAR



WHERE DID YOU GET IT?

FOUND IT ON THE GARDEN PATH!



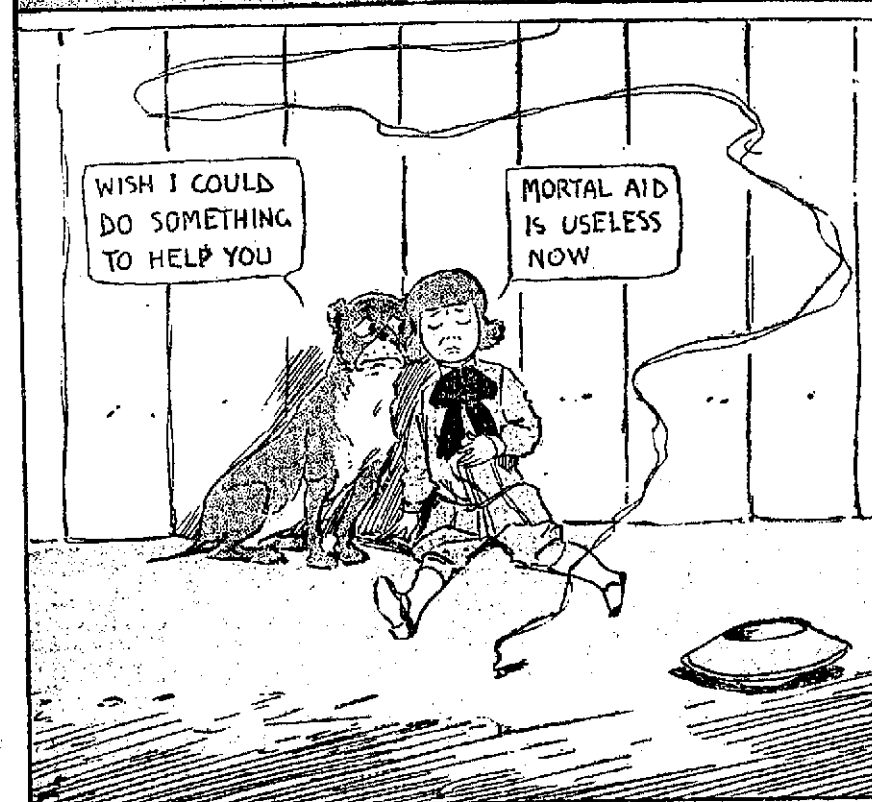
OH! LOOK!

MY!

HE DOES IT WELL!

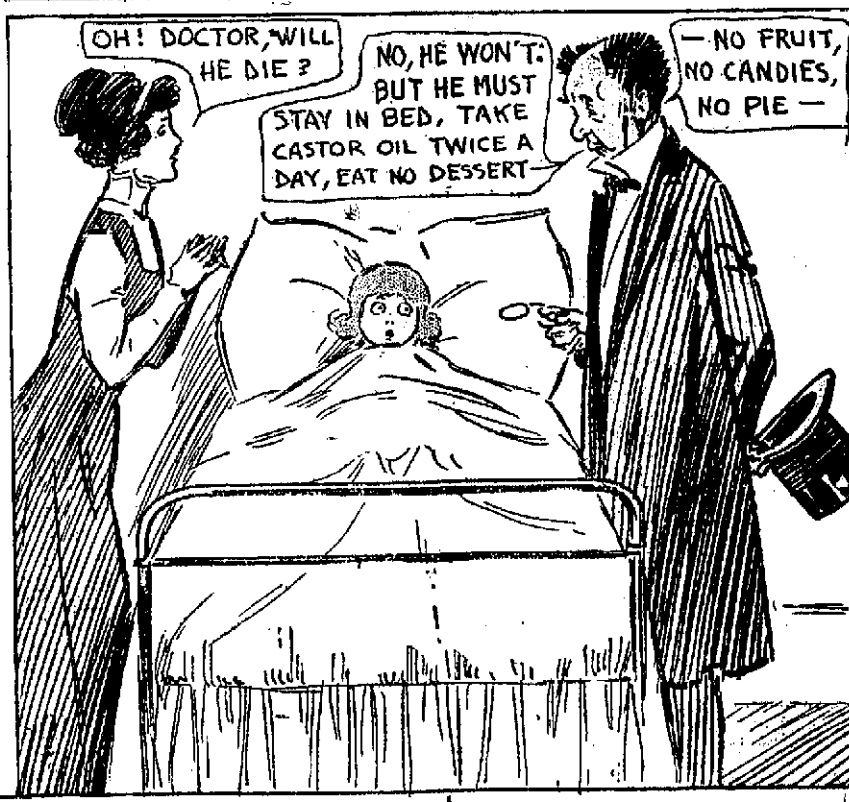


I'D LIKE TO BE YOUR FATHER FOR JUST ABOUT TWO MINUTES!



WISH I COULD DO SOMETHING TO HELP YOU

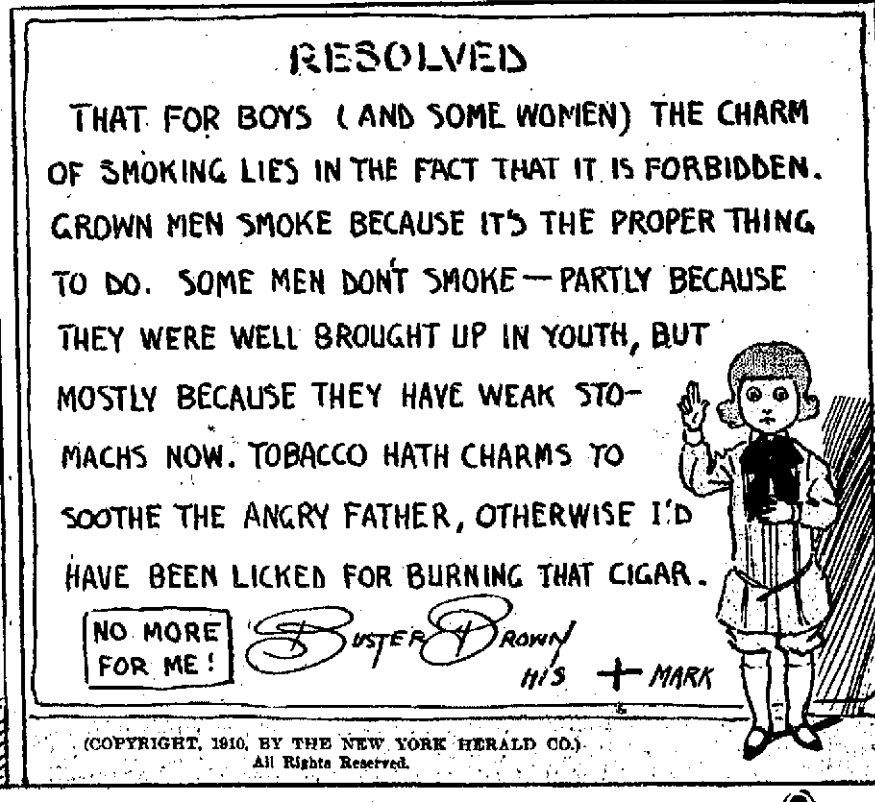
MORTAL AID IS USELESS NOW



OH! DOCTOR, WILL HE DIE?

NO, HE WON'T. BUT HE MUST STAY IN BED, TAKE CASTOR OIL TWICE A DAY, EAT NO DESSERT

— NO FRUIT, NO CANDIES, NO PIE —



RESOLVED

THAT FOR BOYS (AND SOME WOMEN) THE CHARM OF SMOKING LIES IN THE FACT THAT IT IS FORBIDDEN. GROWN MEN SMOKE BECAUSE IT'S THE PROPER THING TO DO. SOME MEN DON'T SMOKE—PARTLY BECAUSE THEY WERE WELL BROUGHT UP IN YOUTH, BUT MOSTLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE WEAK STOMACHS NOW. TOBACCO HATH CHARMS TO SOOTHE THE ANGRY FATHER, OTHERWISE I'D HAVE BEEN LICKED FOR BURNING THAT CIGAR.

NO MORE FOR ME!

BUSTER BROWN

HIS + MARK

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WHEN AGE WAS VICTORIOUS

BY ANNA EICHBERG KING.

ACROSS the narrow street, paved with cobblestones, among which the grass sprouted, stood the old brick church with its solitary gable surmounted by a primitive bell-tower. When the bell tolled, Miss Penrose's abode across the way vibrated, and so did the doughnuts on the baker's counter underneath, for Miss Penrose lived over the bakeshop.

When the rickety depot carriage swung up before Miss Penrose's house, Aurora, within it, sat looking about in speechless rapture. The ancient hackman climbed down from his perch and breathed in upon her an air of mingled whiskey and peace.

"You're here, mein," he said, and Aurora looked at him with such an engaging smile that he coughed confidentially behind a very dirty hand and added: "She do have the queerest folks come visitin'. One's owin' me a quarter two years come August. He writes poetry. I wouldn't have her know for nothin'!" and he released her. Aurora flew up the narrow stairs.

"The old Aurora and the young Aurora!" and she was held at arm's length, and the old Aurora looked at her with critical eyes just a little weary.

"I wouldn't mind being old if I were as distinguished as you are!" and young Aurora flung her arms about her aunt.

Miss Penrose winced a little. "So it seems that I am really old? I say it over and over to myself, but I have never quite believed it."

"If I'm only as nice as you when I'm as old—"
"For Heaven's sake, child, that will do. It only proves that an old Aurora is absurd. I abhor the name but," she said gaily, kissing her niece, "may you live to be an old Aurora of a hundred."

"What a heavenly place!" said young Aurora, sinking into a low chair and sighing with joy. It was a queer, curving room with five windows full of plants. There was a littered desk and a low table beside a couch, and on the wide hearth a driftwood fire blazed with green and scarlet and golden flames, while the early summer sun flickered through the vines at the windows.

"What a heavenly place!" young Aurora repeated. "Wait till you see my workshop! Now come to your room. Ah, child, I'm glad you have come! I need youth about. You see I had nearly forgotten that I was growing old."

From the balcony of Miss Penrose's workshop you could look down the winding river just past the Whitely lighthouse to the ocean.

Miss Penrose proclaimed her supreme indifference to the social amenities when she moved into the old house on the wharf with a bakeshop underneath,

A faint blush crept into Miss Penrose's face. "It should be, for it is from Roger Lythgoe."

"Not the poet?" and young Aurora's eyes were round with wonder and reverence.

"Yes, the great Roger Lythgoe," Miss Penrose took the letter, but she looked absently at the girl.

"Aurora, if I could have a wish fulfilled it would be to be you—to look like you."

"But aunt, dear, think of your mind and mine—I am so commonplace."

"I know it," and Miss Penrose opened her letter. Young Aurora had a modest opinion of her own mind—she acquiesced.

"Aunt Aurora, how I should like to see him! I never saw a real poet."

"Well, he threatens to come," and Miss Penrose frowned.

"Oh, how beautiful!" Then Aurora's face fell. "But he wouldn't notice me."

"I don't know—you never can tell," and the fine, down lines on Miss Penrose's mouth stood sharply out.

"What is he like?"

"I never saw him."

"Never saw him?"

"He came once two years ago, but I had gone away."

"And he was so disappointed that he forgot to pay the hackman," and Aurora laughed. "How I want to see him—but I'd have no chance with you about—poor commonplace me!" The wind was fluttering the skirt of her white gown and a red gauze scarf she had tied about her dusky hair. She was wonderfully pretty.

"But tell me, aunt, what is Mr. Lythgoe like?"

"He writes that he is the homeliest man ever made. Are you preparing to fall in love with him, Aurora?"

Miss Penrose laughed, but there was a sharp ring in her voice.

Miss Penrose sat at her desk writing and Aurora watered the plants. She put each on the window-sill and deluged it most unreflectingly. The house vibrated as the old church across the way boomed the hour.

"If you wish to respect time, have it measured off," said Miss Penrose. "The bell says an hour is dead; it will never come back again."

"Who cares!" said young Aurora.

"Wait till the hours grow scarce."

"When I'm as old as you, perhaps," Miss Penrose winced.

"You are not commonplace, Aurora; you have a way of putting things."

Aurora was glad that her distinguished aunt did not consider her commonplace, and she watered the flowers with renewed enthusiasm, when up from the street there came a deep growl, and Aurora thrust her bright face among the pots and fell back with a gasp of frightened amusement. "I poured the water right on his head," she gasped; "such a funny little man—look at him!" The victim before her mopped his hat and face. "I believe he is rooted to the spot—why doesn't he go away?"

Miss Penrose looked through the ivy trellis. The victim of the watering pot was still looking up, his damp hat in his hand and his white hair glistening in the afternoon sun. "Child, I think you have really made a conquest."

"That old thing?" and Aurora flung herself into a chair and laughed hysterically, just as the door-bell gave a sharp peal.

"He's angry, and he's come to—" and Aurora turned pale.

"My dear, if you will pour water over elderly gentlemen, you must take the consequences," and Miss Penrose retreated, laughing, just as the hall door opened and the little maid-servant ushered in a short, stout elderly man, whose gray beard lay on his portly breast as on a salver. Aurora rose and stared apprehensively at her victim.

"Aurora!" he cried passionately, and took her long, slim fingers in his own. "At last!"

Aurora stared at him with frightened brown eyes. "I knew you at once," he said.

"You knew me at once?" she faltered.

"When I saw your beautiful face among the flowers"

Aurora recovered herself and smiled. He might be insane but he was certainly civil. "I knew it must be Aurora Penrose—this was the face of my dreams. But why," he cried reproachfully, "why did you persist in maligning yourself?"

"Forgive me," young Aurora said, in polite perplexity. "If I ask who you are?"

He turned quite pale. "Can you not guess?" he faltered. "Did I not prepare you to see the ugliest man God ever made, and did you not say it was the man and not the face?"

"Oh, dear me! I am afraid this is all a dreadful mistake!"

"A mistake? How is that possible? Surely you are Aurora Penrose?"

"Yes, I am Aurora Penrose—"

"God be praised!"

"But so is my aunt."

He sank upon the nearest chair and Aurora lingered, her hand on the door-knob. She was sorry for him, she knew the disillusion in store for him.

"Who shall I say?" she asked gently.

"Roger Lythgoe."

Young Aurora gasped. She looked at him as at a vision. He seemed taller and slimmer and his eyes were quite beautiful behind the gold spectacles. As for the great poet, he vouchsafed her not another glance, but bent all her energies to rubbing the nap of his ruined hat. He was still at it when Miss Penrose came in, and for a moment they stood and looked at each other in silence.

"Do you find me disappointing?" Miss Penrose asked abruptly.

"Let me rather ask, do you find me so?"

They looked at each other again and neither spoke. Then they both blushed. Her last letter he always carried in his breast pocket, and its very touch had made him quiver—how often he had kissed the fine, clear writing! His forehead grew damp at the mere remembrance, and somehow he could not see himself in future carrying about the correspondence of this elderly lady. As for Miss Penrose, she remembered with a kind of horror the long evenings she had dreamed away on her balcony, his letter her only companion, reading the passionate utterances of the man she had never seen.

It was Miss Penrose who first recovered herself. "So after two years I at last see the poet," she said, politely.

"And I the distinguished artist," he added, with a forced smile. "Your pictures are poems without words; mine were needless."

"I had just sent you a letter begging you not to come," she exclaimed abruptly.

"Why?"

"I don't know, but I was right."

Mr. Lythgoe had fought a gallant fight and was recovering his equanimity. "And this is the room you have so well described to me," and he looked curiously about. "How often I have longed to be here and in its peace and silence to read to you, first of all the world, what I had written."

Would she expect him to explain extravagant passages in his correspondence? It would be very com-

barrasing if she did.

"Come up to my balcony," she said, with a slightly sarcastic smile; "there you will find plenty of subjects for poems." He climbed heavily after her, breathing short and mopping his forehead.

In the corner of the balcony young Aurora lay among the red cushions. She sprang up with glowing color. She was radiant.

"Is it not rather sudden, Aurora?"

"Oh, no, aunt—six weeks." There was a touch of condescension about Aurora. She was trying to explain the A B C of love to a backward old child.

"Just think; he said," and the pretty color flushed to her bright eyes, "that I was his inspiration." Miss Penrose closed one eye and examined her canvas.

"And yet you remember you said I was commonplace. I told him that you said I was commonplace," and Aurora pouted.

"That was a mistake on your part, child, for he has at least a great respect for my—mind. He will remember that remark."

"It was then that he said I was his inspiration," Aurora cried, triumphantly, while Miss Penrose scraped her palette.

"Then see that you attend strictly to business," and she made a rasping sound with her knife, "for the poem he read last night was simply atrocious."

"Oh, aunt, how can you!" Miss Penrose paced the studio, triumphantly jingling the keys in her apron pockets. "I shall certainly tell him what you said."

"Tell him, by all means!"

"And poets are so sensitive, and I wanted him to look up to you like a son."

Miss Penrose stopped suddenly before her niece. "Aurora, we will draw the line there. Roger Lythgoe is five years older than I am, and I don't propose to burden myself with a ready-made son of that age. Marry him by all means—but if you value his reputation don't be his inspiration! Come, to think of it, what are you marrying him for, anyhow?"

"He is so distinguished," said Aurora. She was answering a question she had often asked herself. "Besides, he adores me, and I never cared for young men. I used to learn his poems by heart at school—the girls raved over them. It will be such fun going back to visit them as Mrs. Roger Lythgoe."

How well it will look on a card—"At home from 8 to 10." I shall go out a great deal, for I shall want to help him all I can. Roger—to think that I shall call him Roger—means to stop over in Springfield to see father. He is going to-morrow. We shall be married in the spring," and Aurora blushed and sparkled. "But I wish he didn't live in California. I hate to write. He says he'll need my letters for inspiration. Of course he tells me everything now, and it seems that someone has been writing him the heavenliest letters these last two years—a woman, of course. He said he nearly made a fool of himself and fell in love with a mind—fancy! But, of course, this is the end now; it wouldn't do for him to raise false hopes."

"I do wish he were as tall as I am," Aurora confessed unasily; "the girls at school are such ones to notice."

"Leave him at home. You have his name and you can take his autographs."

"Aunt Aurora, I sometimes think you are very sarcastic. Roger does. He says that you are not quite what he expected. He thought you would be sadder—more poetic."

"Did he, indeed?"

"He thinks you are a little unfeeling, but he did say that you don't show it in your work, and that your illustrations to his poems two years ago were much more beautiful than the poems. He is so generous, you know." Miss Penrose's blue eyes grew very soft. "But he was a little disappointed."

"Was he?" and Miss Penrose recovered herself. "Well, so was I, child, and you can tell him so! That is, you needn't!" she added hastily.

The next day Aurora paced the railway platform beside her poet. It was a dingy, dirty place with an overwhelming aroma of decayed fruit, and coal dust; the last place for the parting of lovers. Aurora wished that everybody could know how distinguished he was, for she was conscious that he was rather short.

Roger Lythgoe drew Aurora behind a protecting baggage truck. "Write me every day, my darling! I am a moody man, and for my work and happiness I shall need the hope and the faith in myself that only love brings. I am ashamed of my folly, but I can't tell you what those letters were to me these last two years. And an absolute stranger, child! What shall I not expect from you, my life, my love, my hope of Heaven!" He crushed her fingers in a passionate clasp. "God bless you, my darling, goodbye!" and he pressed her hand to his lips and tore himself away.

She stood there, watching the train and rubbing her hands.

He thrust his head out of the window, and the sunlight was reflected from his spectacles and made his white hair glisten.

Someone spoke to her. She tried to look melancholy—she felt she ought to. It was one of the handsome young men in tennis flannels.

"You are Miss Penrose," he said, smiling. "I am Robert Meriton. My sisters called on you, but you weren't in."

"I have been much engaged lately," Aurora said with elderly affability.

"Yes, with that old gentleman."

"That gentleman," and she ignored the offensive adjective, "is Mr. Roger Lythgoe—Roger Lythgoe, the poet."

"By love, you don't say so! I remember learning his pieces by heart when I was quite a little shaver, and getting spanked when I couldn't remember 'em. So that's Roger Lythgoe? But I say, Miss Penrose, will you play tennis this afternoon?"

"Yes, I will play," she said, very soberly, to balance the confession, and she felt a little guilty because he strolled home beside her.

Her aunt was on the balcony; there was a dreary look in her blue eyes and she sighed. The slam of the front door and two young voices roused her; then Aurora burst into the room breathless and eager. The young man was patiently waiting downstairs.

"And so your dear poet has gone, my child," and she drew her toward her. "And what will you do now? You must not cry your pretty eyes out."

"I am going to play tennis with the Meritons. That's what I came to tell you,"—Aurora was breathless—"Mr. Meriton is waiting below," and she was gone like a flash.

Miss Penrose looked down again at the river. It was so peaceful, so beautiful, but a pretty little naphtha launch broke the silence and scooted about nervously.

"To come on the wings of love and to return in a naphtha boat!" and she laughed, but without mirth. She took a package of letters from under the red cushion. "Shall I send them back? No, he will be consoled enough to rejoice because I kept them. Shall I destroy them? No, why should I? They are from a soul to a soul, and both souls are dead. Oh, foolish poet! I am afraid you will find that it would have been better to have loved an old maid."

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which flavored the atmosphere with doughnuts.

"I shall buy the house from the baker if I can," Miss Penrose said to Aurora, "and I mean to live here and die here. You will inherit it after I am cremated—remember, I wish to be cremated," and she paused in the washing of her brushes. She had on a long calico paint-splashed pinafore and there was a tired look in her face. On the easel stood her last work, a sunlit spring landscape with apple trees in glorious blossom and a pool reflecting the spring sky—and there was a touch of chill in the splendor of the sky.

"You see, it is the youth of the year," she explained, "and youth is always a bit cruel."

"Please don't!"

"Don't what, child?"

"Talk of dying," and Aurora shivered.

"Why not? It is the most interesting experience in life—the only experiment each makes for himself. Sometimes I long for the time— I am a little tired of my own body," she said; "it has stood between me and happiness."

Aurora stared at her aunt. To be tired of one's own body—it was beyond her. The young Aurora's body was a particularly agreeable one. "You must have been a very fascinating woman," she said. "I am sure many men have been in love with you."

"Not just with me, child, but with my mind. Nevertheless it's very kind of you. There, run down and see if that was the postman."

The balcony was shielded by a Japanese screen and in one corner stood an easy chair. Miss Penrose leaned back among the red cushions and stared down the river.

"Dear aunt, here is a letter—such an interesting hand."

"Aurora, do you understand?" he cried bitterly. "I love you!"

"You love me?" she repeated—"and Aurora?"

"It is true," he groaned, and turned away. "Forgive me!"

"Roger," and she held out her hand, "do not let her suffer, for she loves you. I—I am old—an old heart can bear wounds. I will always be your friend, as I have been. Come to me for the strength you think I can give, and it will be my glory that I was able to help you by word or deed."

He held her two hands in his with a grasp that pained, and their eyes met. "Roger," and out of her face faded all the lines of pain and bitterness, and her eyes filled with unaccustomed tears. "You do not know how I love you—"

"Why, Roger, when did you come?" An uneasy silence fell on the noisy group. He shook hands with Aurora—he couldn't kiss her before all these curious young eyes.

That night Aurora went to her aunt's room for moral support.

"Hasn't he grown old!" and she threw herself on the bed. Miss Penrose looked at Aurora with a guilty start and thrust away a pile of letters.

"The idea of looking at old letters!" and Aurora yawned. "I wish people wouldn't write letters—it's such work to read them. Then Roger's got the most dreadful handwriting. But hasn't he grown old?"

"I don't think," said Miss Penrose, "that he looks happy."

"Don't you? I wonder why? I know he adores me."

Fortunately she did not wait for an answer.

"The cruelty of youth," old Aurora murmured, and beat away a moth that tried to commit suicide in the yellow flame of the candle.

The tide was low. They strolled along the gray beach strewn with seaweed and whitening shells and pebbles.

"Is it reasonable that she can love me?" he claimed, and stood stock still and looked at her. The wrinkles on her forehead vanished, and she laughed. "You must not ask me."

He laughed against his will. "I shall make him unhappy."

They walked on in silence.

"What does a handsome young creature like that want to marry me for?" he cried in desperation.

"You have asked her; what did she say?"

"Did I believe her capable of breaking her word and my heart? She is so singularly obtuse! What shall I do? As a gentleman, I cannot break my word."

"You've just deserted me, Roger," and Aurora pouted. "What were you doing in that church?" Roger turned scarlet to his spectacles and old Aurora drew young Aurora to the couch and patted one hand and then Roger patted the other, but neither spoke.

"What is the matter?" Aurora cried.

"Aurora, my darling," Aunt Aurora began, but her lips trembled.

"Let me speak," Roger interrupted hastily. "I am to blame." But he did not seem to find words to begin.

"Is father sick, or mother?" and Aurora turned white.

"No, child, no—"

"What has happened?" and she tried to draw her hands away, but they both clung to her.

"Aurora, Aurora, I know you will forgive—"

Roger began very uncertainly, just as the door was opened and a long, lank man put in his head.

"Mrs. Lythgoe, pardon me, but you left your sunshade in the church," whereupon he withdrew.

"Mrs. Lythgoe!" she cried, and measured old Aurora from head to foot; "I don't believe it!"

"No, not so long as you are in the encyclopedias

and newspapers."

Well, to be honest, she will make me unhappy."

They walked on in silence.

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"Mrs. Lythgoe, pardon me, but you left your sunshade in the church," whereupon he withdrew.

"Mrs. Lythgoe!" she cried, and measured old Aurora from head to foot; "I don't believe it!"

"No, not so long as you are in the encyclopedias

and newspapers."

Well, to be honest, she will make me unhappy."

They walked on in silence.

"What does a handsome young creature like that want to marry me for?" he cried in desperation.

"You have asked her; what did she say?"

"Did I believe her capable of breaking her word and my heart? She is so singularly obtuse! What shall I do? As a gentleman, I cannot break my word."

"You've just deserted me, Roger," and Aurora pouted. "What were you doing in that church?" Roger turned scarlet to his spectacles and old Aurora drew young Aurora to the couch and patted one hand and then Roger patted the other, but neither spoke.

"What is the matter?" Aurora cried.

"Aurora, my darling," Aunt Aurora began, but her lips trembled.

"Let me speak," Roger interrupted hastily. "I am to blame." But he did not seem to find words to begin.

"Is father sick, or mother?" and Aurora turned white.

"No, child, no—"

"What has happened?" and she tried to draw her hands away, but they both clung to her.

"Aurora, Aurora, I know you will forgive—"

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